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Report of the Economic and Social Council

Programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session (A/73/400). During its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses dated 22 October 2018.

2. During its 2018 session, the Economic and Social Council adopted two resolutions and one decision: (a) resolution 2018/19 on the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti; (b) decision 2018/239 on the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its thirteenth session and provisional agenda for its fourteenth session, containing the outcome of the thirteenth session, Forum resolution 13/1; and (c) resolution 2018/23 on the new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa. With respect to resolution 2018/19 and decision 2018/239, the related budgetary requirements for 2018–2019 amounting to $69,200 would be accommodated within the approved budget level for the biennium for section 9, Economic and social affairs, including through extrabudgetary funding. The related budgetary requirements for 2020 and 2021 amounting to $282,900 would be accommodated within the overall resources that would be made available under section 9, Economic and social affairs. With respect to resolution 2018/23 on the new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa, the overall resource requirements are proposed to be met through the realignment of resources for 2018–2019.

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II. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council during 2018

Resolution 2018/19: Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

3. By its resolution 2018/19, the Economic and Social Council, inter alia, decided to extend the mandate of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti until the conclusion of its 2019 session, and requested the Advisory Group to submit a report on its work to the Council for its consideration at its 2019 session (A/73/400, subparas. 6 (a) and (d)).

4. It is estimated that the support to be provided to the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would amount to $39,200, comprising: (a) the travel expenses of members of the Advisory Group and up to two staff members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to meet with representatives of the international financial institutions and the Organization of American States in 2019 and to undertake a mission to Haiti in the same year ($36,700); and (b) meeting support services in Haiti ($2,500). The Secretary-General proposes that the above resource requirements be accommodated within section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (A/73/400, paras. 7 and 8).

Decision 2018/239: report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its thirteenth session and provisional agenda for its fourteenth session

Outcome of the thirteenth session, United Nations Forum on Forests, resolution 13/1

5. In its decision 2018/239, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its thirteenth session and provisional agenda for its fourteenth session (E/2018/42-E/CN.18/2018/9), containing the outcome of the thirteenth session, Forum resolution 13/1. By its resolution 13/1, the Forum requested its secretariat to report on progress in implementing the communication and outreach strategy to the Forum at its fourteenth and subsequent sessions, and to produce, from within existing resources, a concise print and online publication on the global forest goals and targets. The Forum also requested its secretariat to prepare a concise "flagship" publication on progress towards achieving the global forest goals and targets, for release by the end of 2021, using existing resources, and to report on planning in that regard to the Forum at its fifteenth session (A/73/400, subparas. 10 (a) and (b)).

6. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that decision 2018/239 gives rise to total resource requirements of $312,900 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, broken down as follows: (a) $30,000 in 2019 for the production of the publication; (b) $44,400 in 2020 for general temporary assistance at the P-4 level for 3 months; (c) $140,000 in 2020 for consultants (comprising 7 authors for 40 working days each); (d) $62,000 in 2020 for the travel of the Advisory Group for 2 meetings of 3 days each, with 10 experts for each meeting; (e) $10,000 in 2020 for an editor for 20 working days; and (f) $26,500 in 2021 for contractual services for layout, translation and printing services (A/73/400, paras. 11–13).

7. The Secretary-General states that the requirements of $30,000 for 2019 would be met within the approved appropriation, including through extrabudgetary funding, while the requirements in the amount of $282,900 for 2020 and 2021 would be

accommodated within the overall resources that would be made available under section 9, Economic and social affairs (A/73/400, para. 14).

Resolution 2018/23: New strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa

8. By its resolution 2018/23, the Economic and Social Council endorsed the new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), under which the ECA subprogrammes would be recalibrated to deliver the Commission's new vision. The report indicates that the five new strategic directions are: (a) advancing the position of ECA as a premier knowledge institution by strengthening the knowledge profile of staff; (b) developing macroeconomic and structural policy options to accelerate economic diversification and job creation; (c) designing and implementing innovative financing models for infrastructure, human, physical and social assets for a transforming Africa; (d) contributing solutions to regional and transboundary challenges, with a focus on peace, security and social inclusion as an important development nexus; and (e) advocating Africa's position at the global level and developing regional responses as a contribution to global governance issues (A/73/400, paras. 16 and 24).

9. Upon enquiry as to coordination between ECA and the United Nations resident coordinator system, the Advisory Committee was informed that ECA has contributed to the drafting of the concept note on the regional optimization plan to enhance coherence and complementarity between the work of ECA and the resident coordinators. Measures outlined in the plan include: (a) familiarization visits by resident coordinators to ECA and key regional offices of agencies, funds and programmes; (b) the development of a protocol for country engagement by Secretariat entities and other non-resident agencies to ensure that resident coordinators are informed of all in-country development activities; and (c) regular invitations by ECA to resident coordinators to regional conferences and platforms.

10. The report of the Secretary-General indicates that the ECA programmes will be organized around eight divisions and nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes: (a) subprogramme 1, Macroeconomic policy and governance; (b) subprogramme 2, Regional integration and trade; (c) subprogramme 3, Private sector development and finance; (d) subprogramme 4, Data and statistics; (e) subprogramme 5, Climate change, environment and natural resource management; (f) subprogramme 6, Gender equality and women's empowerment; (g) subprogramme 7, Subregional activities for development; (h) subprogramme 8, Economic development and planning; and (i) subprogramme 9, Poverty, inequality and social policy (A/73/400, para. 27).

11. In paragraph 21 of the report it is indicated that the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, at its fifty-first session, adopted resolution 959 (LI), in which the Conference acknowledged with appreciation the new strategic focus of the Commission with, as its key priorities, the following six areas: (a) eradicating poverty and addressing inequality; (b) achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women; (c) accelerating economic integration and trade through increased diversification, stronger institutions, better governance and closer engagement with the private sector; (d) promoting green and blue economic development paths through energy, natural resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation; (e) expanding domestic resource mobilization as a long-term path to sustainable development finance; and (f) forging a data-informed policy architecture. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the six key priorities are embedded within the nine new ECA subprogrammes and form its

programme of work, all of which are geared towards contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063, "The Africa We Want".

12. The report of the Secretary-General also sets out the following principles for the restructuring of the Commission's organizational units: (a) all divisions, substantive and programme support, will be organized with a minimum of three sections; (b) each substantive division will follow a minimum-based capacity post distribution principle of three P-5, four P-4, and five P-3 posts, while retaining the number of P-2 posts as set out in the programme budget; and (c) each subregional office will be organized into a maximum of two sections and an administrative and finance unit and will follow, to the extent possible, a minimum-based capacity post distribution principle of two P-5, three P-4, four P-3 and four P-2 posts (A/73/400, para. 28).

13. Annexes I and II of the report contain the current and the proposed ECA organizational structures, respectively. **The Advisory Committee notes that annex I reflects the current organizational structure according to the divisions of ECA, whereas annex II reflects the proposed organizational structure by subprogramme. The Committee further notes that annex I includes posts funded by extrabudgetary resources whereas annex II does not. The Committee is of the view that in order to facilitate a comparison of the current and proposed structures, there should be consistency in the presentation of the organizational structures.**

14. According to the report of the Secretary-General, the overall resources proposed for section 18A of the programme budget for the biennium, Regional commission in Africa, is $154,643.000, which would provide for a total of 535 posts, in line with the initial appropriation for 2018–2019 (A/73/400, paras. 38 and 40). Table 6 of the report provides a summary of the proposed post changes, which comprise new posts, reclassifications, redeployments and abolishments. Upon enquiry, the Committee was provided with the following table showing the posts proposed for abolishment, establishment and reclassification.

Table 1

Posts proposed for abolishment, establishment and reclassification

Section 18 A
Economic Commission for Africa

Abolishment						*Establishment*					
Position No.	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Comment*
31023359	P-5	Senior Administrative Officer	Administration	6112	Division of Administration/ programme support	P-5	Chief of Section, Economic Affairs	Economic Affairs	7605	Agriculture and Business Enabling Environment Section, Private Sector Development and Finance Division, subprogramme 3	A new Chief of Section (P-5) to be established in the Agriculture and Business Enabling Environment Section, Private Sector Development and Finance Division, under new subprogramme 3, upon the abolishment of post No. 31023359 (P-5 6112 Senior Administrative Officer) under the Division of Administration, programme support

Abolishment						Establishment					
Position No	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division/ subprogramme*	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division/ subprogramme*	*Comment*
30450348	P-5	Chief of Section, Information Management	Information Management	8386	Publications and Documentations Section, Public Information and Knowledge Management Division/ programme support	P-5	Chief of Section, Economic Affairs	Economic Affairs	7605	Energy Infrastructure and Services Section, Private Sector Development and Finance Division, subprogramme 3	A new Chief of Section (P-5) to be established in the Energy Infrastructure and Services Section, Private Sector Development and Finance Division, under new subprogramme 3, upon the abolishment of post No. 30450348 (P-5 8386 Chief of Section, Information Management) under the Public Information and Knowledge Management Division, programme support
30452697	P-5	Chief of Section, Statistics	Statistics	7551	Africa Center for Statistics, subprogramme 4	P-5	Chief of Section, Economic Affairs	Economic Affairs	7605	Innovative Finance and Capital Markets Section/Private Sector Development and Finance Division/ subprogramme 3	A Chief of Section (P-5) to be established in the Innovative Finance and Capital Markets Section under new subprogramme 3, based on the abolishment of post No. 30452697 (P-5 7551 Chief of Section) under subprogramme 4

Abolishment						*Establishment*					
Position No.	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Comment*
30451031	P-4	Geographic Information Officer	Statistics	3613	Africa Center for Statistics, subprogramme 4	P-5	Chief of Section, Economic Affairs	Economic Affairs	7605	Natural Resources Management Section/ Climate Change, Environment and Natural Resource Management Division/ revised subprogramme 5	A new Chief of Section (P-5) to be established in the Natural Resources Management Section under subprogramme 5, based on the abolishment of post No. 30451031 (P-4 3613 Geographic Information Officer) under suprogramme 4 and the downgrading of post No. 30450346 (P-5 2021 to P-4 10252 Chief of Unit)
30452624	P-4	Protocol Office	Protocol	5493	Protocol, Travel and Transport Services Section/ programme support	P-4	Facilities Management Officer	Engineering Facilities/ Facilities Management	3324	Facilities Management (Division of Administration-Facilities Management Section)/ programme support	P-4 to be established in the Facilities Management Section (Division of Administration — Field Management Section)/ Programme Support, based on the abolishment of post No. 30452624 under the Protocol, Travel and Transport Services Section/ programme support

Abolishment						*Establishment*					
Position No.	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Comment*
30451008	P-3	Electrical Engineer	Facilities Management	3109	Facilities Management (Division of Administration, Field Management Section)/ programme support	P-3	Protocol Officer	Protocol	5493	Protocol, travel and transport services section/ programme support	P-3 to be established in the Protocol, Travel and Transport Services Section/ programme support based on the abolishment of post No.30451008 (P-3 3109 Electrical Engineer) under the Facilities Management Section (Division of Administration — Field Management Section)/ programme support
30450336	P-3	Governance and Public Administration Officer	Public Administration	3616	African Union and NEPAD Support Team (Capacity Development Division)/ discontinued subprogramme 5	P-3	Information Management Officer	Information Management	3981	Climate Change Section/revised subprogramme 5	A Public Information Officer (P-3) to be established in the Climate Change Section under revised subprogramme 5, based on the abolishment of post No. 30450336 (P-3 3616 Governance and Public Administration Officer) under discontinued subprogramme 5

Abolishment						*Establishment*					
Position No.	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Level*	*Job title*	*Job family*	*Job code*	*Office Division subprogramme*	*Comment*
					Reclassification						
30450346	P-5	Chief of Section, Budget	Finance	2021	Integrated Planning and Budgeting Section (Strategic Planning, Partnerships and Operational Quality Division)/ Executive Direction and Management	P-4	Chief of Unit, Budget	Finance	10252	Integrated Planning and Budgeting Section/ Executive Direction and Management	**This is both a reclassification and a redeployment from Executive Direction and Management to programme support**

15. **The Advisory Committee notes that it is proposed, inter alia, to abolish 1 P-5 post and 1 P-4 post under subprogramme 4 on statistics. The Committee trusts that the abolishment of these posts will not adversely impact mandate implementation, and that the Secretary-General will keep this under review in order to ensure that ECA will have adequate resources for its statistics function.**

16. Under programme support, the report of the Secretary-General indicates that a new Budget Unit would be constituted within the reconfigured Finance and Budget Section, staffed through the downward reclassification of a post of Chief of Section, Budget (P-5), to Chief of Unit, Budget (P-4) (A/73/400, para. 232). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the current Budget Unit, which is under the Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division, will be transferred to and merged with the Finance Section, to be led by a Chief at the P-5 level under the Division of Administration, in order to promote and implement an integrated and coherent approach with regard to the Commission's financial resources. The Committee was further informed that, as a result of the streamlining and reorganization of the ECA programme of work and its administrative components, it was possible to reallocate resources to support the new subprogrammes within the initial appropriation for the biennium 2018–2019. **The Advisory Committee expects that the Secretary-General will provide more information on the reconfiguration of the Finance and Budget Section in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2020.**

17. The report states that it is proposed to abolish a Protocol Officer post (P-4) and to establish a Facilities Management Officer post (P-4) under the Facilities Management Section, and to abolish an Electrical Engineer post (P-3) and establish a Protocol Officer post (P-3) under the Protocol, Travel and Transport Services Section (A/73/400, subparas. 235 (d) and (e)). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the staffing changes are proposed due to the different job families under the two Sections. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that more information should have been provided to justify the category of staffing changes proposed, for instance, abolishment and establishment instead of reclassification, redeployment or reassignment. The Committee expects that future staffing proposals will be accompanied with detailed justifications.**

18. With respect to extrabudgetary resources, the Advisory Committee was provided upon enquiry with the following table on the extrabudgetary contributions received by ECA over the last 10 years. **The Advisory Committee notes the recent downward trend in the extrabudgetary contributions received by ECA and encourages the Commission to strengthen its efforts to seek extrabudgetary resources.**

Table 2
Extrabudgetary contributions received by the Economic Commission for Africa from 2008 to 2018

(Millions of United States dollars)

2008	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*	*2017*	*2018**
13.89	28.48	22.04	21.61	31.73	19.26	23.04	26.60	9.85	9.98	5.91

* From January 2018 to 8 October 2018.

III. Conclusion

19. Section III of the report sets out the action requested of the General Assembly. **In relation to Economic and Social Council resolution 2018/19 on the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, and Council decision 2018/239 on the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests, containing its resolution 13/1, the Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposal to accommodate $69,200 within the approved budget level for 2018–2019 under section 9, Economic and social affairs, and to accommodate $282,900 within the overall resources that would be made available under section 9, Economic and social affairs, for 2020 and 2021.**

20. **With respect to Council resolution 2018/23 on the new strategic directions of the Economic Commission for Africa, subject to its comments and recommendations above, the Advisory Committee has no objection to the proposed realignment of resources to meet the overall related resource requirements. The Committee also recommends that the General Assembly take the following actions with regard to the proposed restructuring of the Economic Commission for Africa, effective 1 January 2019:**

(a) **Approve the proposed restructuring, including the related redistribution of posts and non-post resources, and the reorganizing, realigning and reprofiling of resources under the new subprogramme structure, as described in the report of the Secretary-General;**

(b) **Approve the establishment of 7 posts (4 P-5, 1 P-4 and 2 P-3) under section 18A, Regional commission in Africa, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019;**

(c) **Approve the abolishment of 7 posts (3 P-5, 2 P-4 and 2 P-3) under section 18A, Regional commission in Africa, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019;**

(d) **Approve the reclassification of a post from the P-5 level to the P-4 level under section 18A, Regional commission in Africa, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.**